

THE
Christian History;

Containing Accounts of the Propagation and Revival
of Religion in *Great Britain, America, &c.*

Saturday JANUARY 19. 1744. § N^o. 99.

Accounts of the Reverend Mr. Whitefield continued.

AND when it pleases God to renew the Face of Religion ; when primitive Christianity, and the Power of Godliness, shall be reviv'd 'in the reforming Churches ; when the Professors of the Gospel shall be recover'd from the *false Principles* they have embrac'd, rais'd above those *dead Formalities* they have so long rested in, and awaken'd out of that *Lethargy* they are fallen into ; when these *expected Times of Reformation* shall come on ; is it not reasonable to suppose God will raise up those to effect it, whom he will furnish with a good Measure of the *primitive apostolick Spirit* ; whose Hearts shall be inflam'd with a burning Zeal for the Honour of the Redeemer, and Love to the Souls of Men ; and who shall therefore be willing to deny themselves in those Things which are dear to the most ; shall not scruple to go out of the *common Road*, to spread the Triumphs of the Gospel, and fetch in Souls to Jesus Christ ; and will not be discouraged by any Opposition they may meet with ? Considering the present State of Things in the Christian World, how can we expect any great Change for the better, but in a Way that shall be extraordinary ?

And if there is any Appearance of such a Work at any Time, or in any Places, surely we should take Care not to slight and undervalue it ; much less should we reproach and censure it, or those who are us'd as Instruments in it ; but, on the contrary, we should rejoice in it, so far as it seems to be from Heaven, and further it with our Prayers, *as those who are waiting for the Kingdom of God.*

We would therefore bespeak the Prayers of *the faithful in Christ Jesus*, into whose Hands these Papers may come, both for our dear Brother the *Author of this Discourse*; who is with great Zeal contending for some important Points of *the Faith once delivered to the Saints*, against some who openly oppose them, and labouring to promote *practical Godliness*, in the Place where divine Providence has appointed his present Station; that he may be assisted and succeeded in all his faithful Services for the *Redeemer's Kingdom*: And also for the Reverend Mr. *Whitefield*, that he may (as he has well express'd himself in some of his Letters to us) "be kept humble and dependent on our dear Lord Jesus; " be preserv'd in his Travels, strengthen'd to his uncommon Labours, and fortified against all Opposition: That *Satan* (who can't but have a peculiar Enmity at those who so set themselves against his Kingdom) may never get *Advantage of him*, to the *Blemish or Hindrance* of the great and good Work which we hope is begun and going on: That God would cause him always to triumph in *Christ*, while he makes manifest the *Savour of his Knowledge* by him in every Place, and uses him as an Instrument to bring back many wandring Sheep to the *Shepherd and Bishop of their Souls*: And very particularly that his purposed coming to us, may be with as full a *Blessing of the Gospel of Christ* as other Places have experienc'd, and much more abundant, by the Will and Grace of our God!

Boston, N. E.

June 7. 1740.

BENJAMIN COLMAN

WILLIAM COOPER.

Extracts from Mr. Smith's SERMON on the Character &c. of Mr. Whitefield.

Others have freely spoken their Sentiments, & I have heard the *Defaming* as well as the *Applause* of many, I said therefore *I will answer also for my Part*; I also will show my Opinion.

1. I shall give you my Opinion of the Doctrines he insisted on among us; to speak more generally, they were Doctrines I am of Opinion agreeable to the Dictates of Reason, evidently founded upon Scripture, exactly correspondent with the Articles of the Establishment, of great Use and Necessity in forming the Christian Life; which I had early imbibed from the best Writers and Systems.----

To be particular,

One of the Doctrines, which he has hardly pass'd over in Silence in any single Discourse, is that of *ORIGINAL SIN*.

By which, I mean nothing less than the Imputation of Adam's first Sin to *all* his Posterity by ordinary Generation; which Imputation is the Resultance of his being constituted to act for them in the extensive Character of a *legal Representative*; the Consequence of which is that *inherent Corruption of Nature* and those *sinful Propensities* we are now born with into the World.---

Another Doctrine, we have lately had in the warmest Language impress'd upon us, is that *Pauline* one of **JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH ALONE**. And here you will remember, how the *Preacher* vindicated himself from all Suspicions of *Antinomian Error*: For while he earnestly contended for our Justification as the *free Gift of God*, by Faith alone, in the Blood of Christ, he took special Care to guard against the Abuse of it, and asserted that good Works were the necessary Fruits and Evidences of true Faith.

REGENERATION was another great Doctrine insisted on: hardly a single Sermon but he mentioned it, sometimes more than twice; and one, and perhaps the best of his Discourses was *ex professo* on this Subject.

Another Doctrine nearly allied to this, was warmly insisted on, viz. The **IMPRESSIONS**, of which was the Preachers own Phrase, *inward Feelings* of the **SPIRIT**. And here you remember, how he guarded against the invi-dious Censure of assuming the Character of an *Apostle*. He renounc'd all **Pretensions** to the extraordinary Powers and Signs of Apostleship. He also allowed these *Feelings* of the Spirit were not in every Person or at all Times in the *same Degree*, & that tho' a *full Assurance* were attainable, yet not of absolute *Necessity* to the *Being* of a Christian-- Only he asserted that we *might* feel the *Spirit of God* in his *sanctifying & saving Impressions* and *witnessing* with our *Spirits*. And what is there in this but what is agreeable to *Reason*! How can we be *led by the Spirit* or have *Joy in the Holy Ghost* without some sensible Perception of it! Can I at any Time feel my Soul in sacred Raptures, burning with the Love of God and Christ, and all my best Passions alive: Can I feel a secret Pleasure in the Word, Ordinances and Communion with God: Can I taste the Powers of the World to come: Can I feel the Threatnings of God impress'd upon my Conscience: or Promises of Paradise working upon my Hopes: Can I groan under the Burthen of my Corruptions, or exult in

the Liberty of Spirit I may have in a calm and retired Hour, in the meditation of my Pardon and of Heaven and Immortality. And yet this Doctrine of *feeling the Spirit* be ridicul'd in an Age of Infidelity,--- This is a Doctrine, I have been acquainted with these many Years-- You have heard me preach it Scores of Times, tho' perhaps clothed in other Expressions,-- And however derided by some, I hope always to have *Enthusiasm* enough to maintain that the *Spirit of God* may be *felt*.

To conclude, all the *Doctrines* now mention'd are *primitive, protestant, puritannick* Ones ; which our good Fore-Fathers *Conformists* and *Dissenters* fill'd their Writings with, and as Dr. *WATTS* has well observ'd they fill'd Heaven apace, for God was with them."

Yet all that Reverence with which I heard these *Doctrines* from the Mouth of our Preacher cou'd not win my Approbation of some few *harsher* Expressions which dropt from his Lips. These in my Opinion may be pronounced *Failings* ; but such as often attend a *warm Zeal* for Orthodoxy in Matters of the last Importance, & are found interwoven with the brightest Characters.

I shall next give you my Opinion of the MANNER of his Preaching.

He appear'd to me, in all Discourses, very deeply affected and impress'd in his own Heart. How did that burn within him, when he spake of the Things touching the *King* ! With what a Flow of Words did he speak to us upon the great Concern of our Souls ! In what a flaming Light did he set out *Eternity* before us ! How earnestly did he press *Christ* upon us ! How close strong and pungent were his *Applications* to the Conscience ; mingling *Light* and *Heat*, pointing the Arrows of the *Almighty* at the Heart of Sinners, while he pour'd in the Balm on the Wounds of the Contrite ! How bold and courageous did he look ? He was no Flatterer. He taught the *Way of God in Truth*, and regarded not the Persons of Men, the *politeſt*, and the most *modiſh* of our Vices he struck at, the most *fashionable* Entertainments ; regardless of every ones Presence but his in whose Name he spake.

I shall now shew my Opinion of his personal Character.

While he preaches up Faith alone in our Justification before God, he is careful to maintain good Works. These Things the Grace of God teaches us. And how much of this

this Doctrine has he transcribed into his Life ! How rich has he been in all good Works ! What an eminent Pattern of Piety towards God ! How holy and unblameable in all Conversation & Godliness ! How season'd, how much to the Use of edifying all his Discourses ! How naturally does he turn them to Religion ! How much is he given to Devotion himself, and how does he labour to excite it in others !

'Tis indisputable with me that he affects no *Party* in Religion, nor sets himself at the Head of any. He is not bigotted to the lesser Rites and Forms of Religion, while zealous enough in all its Essentials. He professes Love to *good Men of every Denomination*. His Heart seems set upon doing Good. He goes about his great Master's Work with Diligence and Application, and with such Chearfulness as would make one in Love with a Life of Religion. He is Proof against Reproach and Inve&tive. When he is reviled he revileth not again ; but prays heartily for all his Enemies.

He renders to all their Due, while zealous for the Things of God is a Friend to *Cæsar*.---And for *Charity* as it consists in *Compassion* and *Acts of Beneficence* we have few Men like minded. Had he been under any criminal Influence of a mercenary Temper ; had he collected Monies for himself in his Journies, under the Pretext of doing it for the Poor as he was *slanderously* reported, he had certainly a fair Opportunity to enrich himself. But *we have seen* ; and plain Fact cannot be denied, that he casts all into the *Treasury*, and serves the Tables of the Poor with it.---*Strolling and Vagabond Orphans* without *Father* and without *Mother*, without *Purse* and without *Friend*, he seeks out, picks up, and adopts into his Family. He is now building Accommodations, and laying the best Foundation for their *Support* and *Maintenance*.

I now proceed to give my Opinion what *Views PROVINCIAL* may have in raising up Men of *this Stamp*.

And this I desire to do with all Humility and Modesty.

I pretend to no Spirit of Prophecy, and can only *conjecture*, and offer the Result of *Observation*, *Reason*, and the usual *Tendencies of Things*, corroborated by the great Promises scattered up and down in our Bibles.

Now we are none of us ignorant, how far the primitive Spirit of Christianity has sunk into a meer Form of Godliness : Irreligion has been rushing in like a Flood : The dear>t and most obvious Doctrines of the Bible fallen into low

Contempt :

Contempt: The Principles and Systems of our *pious Fathers* have been more and more exploded. And now God seems to have reviv'd the ancient Spirit and Doctrines. He is raising up of our young Men with Zeal and Courage to stem the Torrent. They have preached with such *Fire, Affinity* and *Success*, such solemn Awe have they struck upon their Hearers? Such deep Convictions have their Sermons produced: so much have they rous'd and kindled the Zeal of *Ministers and People*: so intrepidly do they push thro' all Opposition: It looks as if some happy Period were opening, &c."

By such Accounts as these many Ministers and People were excited to desire his Assistance in carrying on that Revival of Religion, which some Years before was begun in some Parts of our Land, and were prepared to embrace him.

Some Account of the late Revival of Religion in Boston, by the Rev. Mr. Prince, one of the Pastors of the South Church.

To the Publisher of the CHRISTIAN HISTORY.

IT is I hope for the Glory of God and the public Good, that I have drawn up the following *Narrative of the late Revival of Religion here*, according to the best of my Remembrance.

And that the Grace and Power of God may appear the more illustrious, it seems fit to give a brief and *previous History* of the general State of Religion here, even from my returning hither in 1717, after above eight Years travelling abroad, to the Time of this Revival at the End of 1740.

On my said Return, there were *five congregational Churches* settled with Pastors in this Town; tho' now they are increased to *five more*. The Pastors were Dr. *Increase and Cotton Mather* of the North Church; Mr. *Wadsworth* with Mr. *Foxcroft* chosen his Colleague of the Old Church; Mr. *Colman* and *Cooper* of the Church in Brattle-Street; Mr. *Sewall* of the South Church; and Mr. *Webb* of the New North: All most happily agreeing in the *Doctrines of Grace*, as laid down in the *shorter and larger Catechisms* and *Confession of Faith*, drawn out of *SCRIPTURE* by the venerable *Assembly of Divines at Westminster*, as well as the *Confession of Faith* agreed

agreed to by our *New-England Synods*, and almost the same with the other. And this *Town* and *Country* were in great Tranquility both civil and religious. But tho' there were many bright Examples of Piety in every Seat and Order ; yet there was a general Complaint among the *pious* and *elderly* Persons, of the great *Decay of Godliness* in the Lives and Conversations of People both in the Town and Land, from what they had seen in the Days of their Fathers. There was scarce a *Prayer* made in Public by the *elder* Ministers without some heavy Lamentation of this *Decay* : In their *Sermons* also they frequently mourn'd it : And the *younger* Ministers commonly follow'd their Example therein.

Soon after my Arrival I was call'd to preach to the *South Church* : And in 1718, ordained their *Co-Pastor* with my dear Clas-Mate the Rev. Mr. *Swall*, who had been ordain'd to that Office about *five Years* before.

In the *Spring* of 1721, the *eight Ministers* who carried on the *public Lecture*, taking into Consideration the lamentable Defect of Piety among our *young People*, agreed to preach a *Course of Sermons* at the *Lecture* to them. The *Audiences* were considerably crowded : And while the *Word of God* was loudly sounding, he lifted up his awful *Red*, by sending the *Small-Pox* into the *Town*, which began to spread to our general *Consternation* : Scarce a *Quarter* of the *People* being thought to have had it ; and none of the numerous *Youth* under *eighteen Years* of *Age*, it being so many *Years* since that fatal Pestilence had prevail'd among us. The *Sermons* were quickly printed, with another added by the venerable Dr. *Increase Mather*, for further Benefit. Many of the *younger* *People* especially were then greatly awakened : And many *Hundreds* of them quickly after swept into *Eternity*.

In the *Spring* of 1722, the *Distemper* left us : But so little reformed were the surviving *Youth*, that at the *End* of the *Summer* the *Pastors* agreed to move their *Churches* to keep in each successively a *Day of Prayer and Fasting* to *ask of God the Effusion of his HOLY SPIRIT*, particularly on the *rising Generation*. And the *Churches* readily receiv'd the Motion.

But tho' a *Solemnity* appeared on many, yet it pleased the *holy God* to humble us and sparingly to give the *Blessing*.

And tho' in the *Spring* of 1726, in an awakening *View* of the *deplorable Decay of Family-Religion*, as a *principal Source* of all other *Decays*, the *Pastors* went into a *Course of public Lectures* on that important *Subject* ; yet they had the further

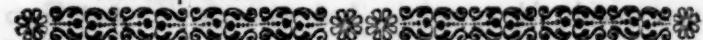
Sorrow

Sorrow to see those Lectures too thinly attended to expect much Benefit from them. *

(To be continued.)

* The several Subjects were these.

Dr. C. Mather. Job 8. 6. on Household Piety in general.
 Mr. Colman. 2 Sam. 6. 20. on Family-Worship.
 Mr. Thacher. Gen. 18. 19. on Family-Instruction.
 Mr. Sewall. 1 Sam. 3. 13. on Family-Government.
 Mr. Prince. Lev. 23. 3. on Family-Sabbatizing.
 Mr. Webb. Psal. 101. 2. on Family-Example.
 Mr. Cooper. Ezek. 16. 20. on improving the *Covenant* relating to Children.
 Mr. Foxcroft. Col. 3. 18, 19. on *Conjugal Duties*.
 Mr. Checkley. Col. 3. 20, 22--24. on the Duties of Children and Servants.
 Mr. Waldron. Prov. 14. 11. the *Character* and *Doom* of wicked Houses.
 Mr. Gee. Eccl. 7. 14. Family *Providences*, especially *afflictive* improved.



Some People are displeas'd with the following Passage in the Account we gave of Mr. Whitefield, in Pag. 336. viz. "At Dr. Colman's Desire and the Consent of the Church on the Lord's-Day after his Arrival he administered to them the holy Communion," we shall briefly recite the Facts upon which this Account was founded. The Dr. having such an Opinion of the Catholick Spirit of his Church, like his own, had desir'd Mr. Whitefield to administer for him: and conformable to a common Practice of getting other Ministers to join in the Administration, he thought it unnecessary in a *formal* Manner to ask the Consent of the Church, & having plainly intimated his Intention in his Prayer after Sermon, on their coming to the Communion Table, only address'd them in such Terms as these-- *The Rev. Mr. Whitefield being providentially with us, I have ask'd him to administer the Ordinance.* And the Dr. says, that by the Countenances of the People, it seem'd to him to be universally agreeable to them. And no Objection being made, it was construed by our Informers that the Church consented to it, and which we think was construed justly. However this we leave to every Reader's Judgment.